



Good News – Funding and Staffing

[Cliff Bembridge has been working with IBEX for nearly five years](#) now in a URC SCM post – a Special Category Ministry post, which is financed through the United Reformed Church centrally. The funding is for an initial five years, with the possibility of extending it for another five years depending on the outcome of the initial period.

We are extremely pleased to be able to announce that the Wessex Synod of the URC applied, with IBEX's support, for the extension to this 5 years, and this has been successful. We are enormously grateful to the United Reformed Church both locally and nationally for this, and are very pleased that what we are seeking to do has been seen as worthwhile enough to support in this way.

The application was led by the URC Wessex Synod, who needed to consider the

situation and agree to apply initially. We were gratified by their enthusiasm to do this.

We are by no means complacent, though, and realise the need very much to carry on working in a way which is not only useful but acceptable to, and maybe even vital to the Churches locally.

Chaplains ... Just like Jesus did ...

“Chaplaincy is one of the most fantastic things I have ever done”. said Nigel Hemmings, the pastor of the Vineyard Church in Winchester and a member of the Winchester City Centre Chaplaincy as he shared his thoughts with a gathering of Chaplains recently.

Nigel wants the Church to be enmeshed in the local community, so that “if you took us out, everybody would notice”. And Nigel does not want to be comfortable, and doing Chaplaincy is a way of getting out there among the people and out of the "comfort" of the Church Office. It's "just as Jesus did".

Everyone needs a chaplain - everyone needs to know that they are loved by God. But people are more likely to respond to someone who listens, rather than someone who will preach. That, of course, is one of the basic premises of chaplaincy.

Read the [rest of the Chaplaincy article here](#) ... Watch this space. We will do it again.

Casinos - Social Evil or Economic Boost?



In the near future, Aspers will be running a Large Casino in the centre of Southampton. So IBEX organised its AGM in June around Rachel Lampard, the leader of the JPIT (Joint Public Issues Team) and an expert on gambling.

Rachel herself doesn't gamble - thinks it's a waste of time - but neither does she think it should be banned. It is certainly something, though, to be concerned about.

Learn [more about who gambles, and the consequences on our website](#) ...

So are Casinos a social evil or an economic boost? A Casino is a bit of both. But it will happen, so what can we do?

Chaplaincy – the staff in a casino are generally poorly paid and under pressure. It's not a good life.

Community Forum – Aspers do this when they open a casino. Getting involved outweighs the danger of “validating” the casino.

Advice and Debt Charities will be all the more needed locally.

The **Local Authority** will monitor the Casino and its operation closely, both through licensing law and public health regulation. So keep the pressure on.

The Referendum and its fallout – A personal view

I was asked at short notice by a journalist on a French Reformed Church magazine about my feelings about the referendum. It is something that was enormously important to me personally. And I am aware that colleagues are very concerned now about what will happen in all sorts of ways.

I felt angry and ashamed on that Friday morning. [You can read more about why I felt this way on our website.](#)

Whatever else happens, there is a great deal of uncertainty around at the moment. Who knows where we will end up, but there is certainly a multi-faceted role for the Church in all of it.

David Wrighton – IBEX Team Leader



'HOW TO ...' - Things to do at your Church - perhaps?

With two thoughts in mind – ‘there is nothing new under the sun’ and ‘there is no need to reinvent the wheel’, IBEX is committed to [developing a ‘How To’ series on our website](#).

Each ‘How to’ will have the same format - questions and answers – to tell you how a church in your area has developed a project – the good, the bad, the things to do and the things to avoid. The Church featured will be happy for you to make contact and visit, allowing you to be encouraged by what it has done, and if appropriate, take the basic idea and adapt it to your situation.

We would welcome any feedback on whether you feel this kind of format would be helpful.

The first one comes from Buckland United Reformed Church in Portsmouth where the church has recently re-ordered its building and opened a 6 day a week coffee shop in the newly extended entrance, staffed by both employees and volunteers. NB. we soon hope to have another ‘How To’ from a church running a coffee bar purely with volunteers.

Editorial note: we have a whole list of How To pages on our website that we are looking to “populate”. We are looking for volunteers who might also be doing some of this stuff, and who might like to share their hard won expertise with others. So if you have set up a Credit Union, started up debt advice, support the unemployed in some way, or do something else that we have not thought of (we are not the experts, perhaps – you are!) Then do let us know. We would give whatever help we can in writing it up if you have “done it and got the t-shirt” but would not know where to start in trying to describe the experience. But whatever that entailed, we would always want to make sure that you were happy with the finished article.

Just think – you highlighting what you are doing today might lead to someone else doing something good somewhere else. It might be called “Spreading the Kingdom”.



Why not visit our Facebook page – and LIKE it?

We aim to make more use of our [Facebook Page](#) in the coming weeks and months. The links between it, our Newsletter and the Website are important.

And it also gives you the opportunity to comment on things, whether you like them, or disagree with what is going on, we would always be interested.



'What Shall We Do With Our Church' Training Day

IBEX will be running another of its “What Shall We Do With our Church” days on Saturday, September 17th at Cliff’s Church – [Buckland URC in Portsmouth](#).

As we have said before, this is not directly about “Fresh Expressions” or about overt Evangelism. It **is** about thinking about how you might make your buildings useful and relevant to the community around you, how to inspire and take your congregation with you, how to aim towards something which could make your Church a vibrant community hub, which is what has happened at Buckland.

But be prepared – it might actually require some hard work, but it could also be fun... and... rewarding.



The Tolpuddle Festival

The Weekend of 16th and 17th July is the weekend of the Tolpuddle Festival. It is a TUC organised event, BUT it does also lay some emphasis, quite rightly, on the religious motives of the six men who were deported to Australia but then brought back because of the unprecedented public outcry.

A link to the programme is

here: <http://www.tolpuddlemartyrs.org.uk/festival/programme>

It is an eclectic mix of music, entertainment and politics... and you don't have to agree with the speakers. But the Festival service – in the Methodist Chapel at the other end of the village at 5 o'clock, will be graced by the presence of Rachel Lampard, the leader of the JPIT – Joint Public Issues Team, and the newly installed Vice-President of the Methodist Conference – in other words the leading lay person in Methodism worldwide for one year. Rachel is very much worth listening to.



The Church of Scotland

The **Methodist** Church



The Refugee Crisis

The Refugee Crisis has been in the news recently to a certain extent for all the wrong reasons – mixed up with stuff about racism in the light of the Referendum result. But the JPIT has just issued an [informative and challenging resource](#) about it. It's well worth some of your time.



DOUBLE REWARD FOR JPIT TEAM LEADER!

Rachel Lampard, the Team Leader of the JPIT and speaker at the recent IBEX AGM in June, has hit the headlines twice in the last few weeks, at least in Methodist Circles ...

Installed as Vice-President of the Methodist Conference Stop trying to fix the poor! The new Vice president of the Methodist Conference is Rachel Lampard, the team leader of the JPIT, and one can therefore expect some quality Social Justice stuff to be in the air for the coming year. Her inaugural address started this, emphasising that people who might struggle in life, for whatever reason, are human too and deserve our prayers and support... but in an empathetic way, rather than in a patronising way. I cannot do the message justice here, but [please read on through the link](#). Just one quote... "When we look at the poor and those in need of justice, do

we see a problem - or do we recognise the face of Jesus Christ? Sadly we have 'problematised' the poor so much that we choose to look for their faults rather than address the problems and pain that not having enough money brings."

Awarded an MBE - A couple of days after the IBEX AGM, we heard that Rachel had been awarded an MBE in the Queen's Birthday Honours List. It was for "Services to the Regulation of Gambling", which is precisely what she had been talking to us about that same week. Our congratulations on this richly deserved recognition!

Who is IBEX?

IBEX – the Church working in the Economy Central South Coast

IBEX is a Christian organisation relating faith to economic life, in Hampshire and Dorset, mainly Bournemouth and Poole.

We are funded by the URC Wessex Synod, Southampton Methodist District and Baptist Home Mission.

Our main areas of activity:

- Support for local churches serving their communities
- Work with Partner Organisations on Community Projects e.g. local authorities, statutory and voluntary organisations
- Support and development of Chaplaincy

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